

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A communications system, comprising:

an advice provider which broadcasts information over a communications
5 medium to a plurality of advice consumers, irrespective of actual relevance of said
information to said plurality of advice consumers, said broadcast information
comprising a relevance clause comprising criteria defined by said advice provider
wherein said information is potentially relevant to a recipient;

an advice consumer of said plurality of advice consumers for gathering said
10 broadcast information from said communications medium; and

a reader associated with said advice consumer for automatically determining
relevance of said gathered broadcast information to said advice consumer, wherein
said determined relevance is at least partially based on an automatic evaluation of
said relevance clause by said reader;

15 wherein said advice consumer is advised of said gathered broadcast
information only if said gathered broadcast information ~~meets certain predetermined
relevance criteria~~ is determined to be relevant by said reader.

2. (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein said reader further comprises:

20 means for providing relevant information to said advice consumer without
revealing any aspect of said advice consumer's identity to said advice provider.

3. (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein relevance of said information to said
advice consumer is based upon any of the properties of an advice consumer's
25 computer, said computer's contents or state, or the properties of a local environment
associated with said computer.

4. (Original) The system of Claim 2, wherein said advice consumer maintains
anonymity, privacy, and security by not revealing to said advice provider either that
30 said advice consumer is interested in information from said advice provider, that said
advice consumer has received any particular message, or that said information is
relevant to said advice consumer.

5. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein said information being broadcast ~~may consist of~~ comprises any of humanly-interpretable content, data, ~~or~~ and software tools.

5 6. (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein said advice provider specifies an audience for whom said information is potentially relevant by referring to properties of an advice consumer which are used to determine the relevance of said information to said advice consumer.

10 7. (Currently Amended) A communications method, comprising the steps of:
 preparing a message at an advice provider ~~location~~;
providing a relevance clause associated with said message at said advice
provider, said relevance clause comprising conditions under which said message is
potentially relevant to potential advice consumers;
 15 broadcasting said message with said relevance clause to said potential advice consumers anonymously using a network, wherein said message is broadcast to advice consumers to whom ~~it-said message~~ is potentially relevant without requiring that said advice consumers divulge their identity or attributes or message-related relevance information to said advice provider;
 20 receiving said broadcast message at said potential advice consumers;
 storing said received broadcast message at an advice consumer location; and
automatically determining at said advice consumer location whether said stored received broadcast message is relevant to said advice consumer, wherein
said determined relevance is at least partially based on an automatic evaluation of
 25 said relevance clause at said advice consumer.

8. (Currently Amended) In a system including computational devices connected by a communications network, a communications apparatus, comprising:
 specific units of advice to be shared;
 30 digital documents conveying said advice;
 an advice provider for broadcasting said advice in the form of advisories to a plurality of advice consumers, wherein each said advisory further comprises a

relevance clause comprising criteria defined by said advice provider wherein said advisory is potentially relevant to a recipient;

an advice consumer of said plurality of advice consumers for receiving said advisories;

5 wherein said advisories are anonymously broadcast over said communications network from said advice provider and are received by said advice consumer, wherein said advisories are potentially relevant to said advice consumer, and wherein said advice consumer is not required to divulge to said advice provider any of their identity, attributes and message-related relevance information; and

10 a communications protocol for narrowly-focused targeting of said received advisories to said advice consumer by automatically matching said received advisories at said advice consumer for whom said received advisories are potentially relevant, wherein said automatic matching is at least partially based on evaluating said relevance clauses at said advice consumer.

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9. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 8, further comprising:

an advice reader associated with an advice consumer computer for performing relevance determination.

20 10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein said relevance determination is automatically performed based on a combination of conditions, including any of hardware attributes, configuration attributes, database attributes, environmental attributes, computed attributes, remote attributes, timeliness, personal attributes, randomization, and advice attributes.

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11. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein said advice reader operates automatically to determine relevance.

12. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 9, said advice reader comprising:

30 a gatherer for gathering advisories to which said advice consumer subscribes;
a subscription manager for entering subscriptions to advisories based on information in at least one advice consumer site definition file;

an unwrapper for parsing said advisories;

a module for determining the relevance of said advisories, said determination being made either continuously, at scheduled intervals, or under user manual control;

a user interface that receives relevant advisories; and

5 a display and management system that displays relevant advisories for inspection by said advice consumer.

13. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein any information that is actually on an advice consumer computer or reachable from said advice consumer computer
10 may be used to determine relevance.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein said advisories comprise:

digital documents ~~which~~ that contain an explanatory component describing in
15 terms said advice consumer can easily understand the reason that said advisory is relevant and the purpose and effects of the action ~~which~~ that is being recommended to said advice consumer.

15. (Withdrawn) A communications apparatus, comprising:

20 an advisory comprising:

a relevance clause comprising an assertion about the state of an advice consumer computer, its contents, or environment which can be automatically evaluated by comparing said assertion with said advice consumer computer's actual state;

25 a message associated with said relevance clause whose suitability for the consumer is determined at least partially by the evaluation of said relevance clause;

a gatherer for assuring that relevance clauses flow into said advice consumer computer from various locations;

30 a watcher for evaluating relevance clauses by comparing them with an actual state of an advice consumer environment, and by inspecting properties of said advice consumer computer and its environment and checking if these point towards or away from relevance; and

a notifier for displaying messages to an advice consumer under at least partial guidance of an evaluated relevance clause.

16. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 15, wherein said relevance clause specifies conditions under which said advisory is relevant, and wherein said advisory further comprising comprises any of:

a wrapper for packaging information in said advisory for transport and subsequent decoding;

a from line ~~for~~ for identifying an advice author;

10 a subject line ~~for~~ for identifying the concern of said advisory;

~~a relevance clause for specifying conditions under which the said is relevant;~~

a message body for providing explanatory material explaining to said advice consumer what condition is relevant, why said advice consumer is concerned, and what action is recommended; and

15 an action button for providing said advice consumer with the ability to invoke an automatic execution of a recommended action.

17. (New) The system of Claim 1, wherein said automatic evaluation of said relevance clause by said reader comprises a parsing said relevance clause into any
20 of a tree of subexpressions and a method dispatch for invoking an inspector.

18. (New) The communications method of Claim 7, wherein said conditions refer to attributes associated with said potential advice consumers.

25 19. (New) The communications method of Claim 7, wherein said determined relevance is based on any of properties of an advice consumer computer, contents of said advice consumer computer, a state of said advice consumer computer, and properties of a local environment associated with said advice consumer computer.

30 20. (New) The communications method of Claim 7, wherein said automatic evaluation of said relevance clause at said advice consumer comprises parsing said relevance clause into any of a tree of subexpressions and a method dispatch for invoking an inspector.

21. (New) The communications method of Claim 20, wherein said subexpressions are evaluated.
- 5 22. (New) The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein said evaluation of said relevance clause at said advice consumer comprises parsing each said relevance clause into any of a tree of subexpressions and a method dispatch for invoking an inspector.